

VZCZCXYZ0025
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHPO #0173/01 1202034
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 292034Z APR 08
FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0136

UNCLAS PARAMARIBO 000173

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/PDA DOUG BARNES, CHAD WEST, AND CHARLOTTE PETERSON,
WHA/CAR JROSHOLT, WHA/EX FOR BILL HALEY AND GREG MORRISON, R/FMO FOR
BOB HIVELY

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [ABUD](#) [AFIN](#) [AMGT](#) [NS](#)
SUBJECT: SURINAME: REQUEST \$13,350 IN ADDITIONAL PUBLIC DIPLOMACY
FUNDING

Ref: Paramaribo 140, Buenos Aires 343, Paramaribo 117, Paramaribo
121, Paramaribo 132, Paramaribo 136

This cable contains an action request. See paragraph 3.

¶1. (U) SUMMARY Embassy Paramaribo thanks WHA/PDA for continued financial support of Post's public diplomacy initiatives and appreciates WHA/PDA's consideration of this request for an additional \$13,3500 in financial assistance. "Mutual U.S./Suriname appreciation and respect contributing to a more effective partnership" is Post's number one Mission Strategic Plan goal, but Post needs additional resources to support it, especially in light of the multi-million dollar "Beyond the Horizons" effort which the Department of Defense is bringing to Suriname in the summer of 2008.
END SUMMARY

Justification

¶2. (SBU) Anti-Americanism is common in Suriname and includes a European-style bias against U.S. security prerogatives and a developing-world style bias against U.S. international economic activity. In order to overcome this bias it is critical to emphasize U.S. humanitarian, social, and cultural outreach - and it is working. While the Mission Strategic Plan calls for an average of six positive Suriname-source print press articles per month, over the last year the Embassy averaged sixteen. Cultural programming has been expanded; Black History Month programming (ref A) drew 1400 guests in 2008, as opposed to 200 in 2007. Other agencies at the Embassy routinely work in advance with the PD section on upcoming projects in order to maximize impact. However, Post's tiny discretionary PD budget has difficulty bearing the costs created by being the standard bearer of Post's top-priority goal. The PD budget cannot stretch sufficiently to cover impromptu needs created when the excellent work of other departments, primarily the MLO, creates opportunities for coverage.

Request: Total and Itemized Priority List

¶3. (U) Total request: \$13,350

Items, in prioritized order:
\$4,200: Beyond the Horizons PD
\$3m150: Educational Exchange: Music and Culture
\$1,000: one-time activity emergency requests
\$5,000: calendar

Post notes that \$13,150 is a fraction of the additional funding received or requested by other Posts, and that Post is already

during "more with less" from a limited palate. Programs being run by other posts in the region to which Post does not have access or has not been able to fund include Fulbright, youth exchange, English teacher training, and academic scholarships (ref B), for starters.

Request: Individual Program Justifications

¶4. (U) Beyond the Horizons PD (\$4,200)
\$4,200 = one overnight trip each to Nickerie and Albina at \$1800 apiece, including transportation and overnight for Embassy support personnel and for up to five journalists; two day trips each to Coronie and Moengo at \$300 for bus rental.
BACKGROUND: The USNS Comfort visit in 2007 required significant overtime, transportation, and other expenses to transport staff and media to/from PD events, organize the opening ceremony, arrange publicity, and produce appropriate PD products. Post is hosting a "Beyond the Horizons" (BTH) Medical and Engineering Readiness Training Exercises 2008. Some of the same challenges will exist. BTH is more complicated as the treatment sites are far from Paramaribo. In order to obtain maximum effect and guarantee coverage by cash-strapped local media, we will again have to provide some transportation to journalists to take them to project sites. Without a proactive engagement of media, the public diplomacy opportunity of this multi-million dollar USG/U.S. Military exercise will be virtually lost.

¶5. (U) Educational Exchange: Music and Culture (\$3,150)
Airfare = \$1,200, U.S. musicians' fee and per diem = \$450, Surinamese musicians = \$1,500
BACKGROUND: In order to build on the success of our continuing cultural outreach and consistently reinforce our positive message of "the many faces of America," Post proposes to bring Kevin Jones to Suriname to participate in exchange workshops and a signature performance together with 23 Surinamese musicians whose name, "Ala

Kondre Dron," or "All Nations' Drums," is synonymous with their message of multi-cultural unity. Jones proved himself an excellent bearer of this message of multi-ethnic harmony when he visited Suriname with the "Rhythm Road" project in 2007, and will be warmly received by the many friends he made in the music world in Suriname, who have been clamoring for a return visit ever since.

¶6. (U) Window-of-opportunity activities and emergency requests (\$1,000)
Two event expenses per month = 5 months x \$100 each = \$1,000, including three election-related evenings.
BACKGROUND: One-time costs and special demands on the Public Affairs section are common. For example, in April PD was asked to provide coverage and positive press play for a delegation of returning Surinamese soldiers from a U.S. military exercise. PD is also supporting the Front Office's request to make the most of this year's exciting election schedule, and developed a slate of ideas, but has no budget for implementation. Similar requests come in month-by-month. In addition, working closely with the Cultural Center of Suriname, which houses our American Corner, the Embassy has established a regular series of programs. The cost to co-sponsor these events is minimal; however, the return on the investment is growing. Events have included Black History Month programs, music and other cultural activities, American classic movies to invited audiences, window of opportunity U.S. speakers, and other programs planned around MSP themes (for "free" programming, see ref A, Two Months, Ten Events, Fifteen Hundred Guests: Black History Month Punches-Up in Suriname, ref C, "Best Kept Secret?" Cultural Programming with Almost no Money," ref D, "State Senator Promotes U.S. Democracy For Free," ref E, "U.S. "Maroon" Introduces Suriname to American Diversity - For Free," and ref F "One Drum:" Funky, Inexpensive Pick-Me-Up for Black History Month). We began cutting back certain programming in December, and continue to do so, but would prefer to remain flexible.

¶7. (U) Calendar (\$5,000)
\$5,000 for 5,000 copies.
BACKGROUND: The Embassy has plans to develop an Embassy calendar to highlight the wide range of assistance to Suriname, along the lines of the one our DCM instituted when he was Public Affairs Officer in La Paz (La Paz continues to produce a high quality product that is

widely distributed to government leaders, national assembly members, etc.).

18. (U) POINT OF CONTACT:

Andy Utschig, Political/Economic Officer
Tel: 011-597-472-900 ext 2208
Fax: 011-597-420-800
Email: utschigas@state.gov

SCHREIBER HUGHES